

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 HA-05 L-03 H-01 SSO-00 CA-01
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O 291325Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8636

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 6632

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC, EFIN, EINV, NI (LEFEVRE, LOUIS)
SUBJECT: AIG/AIIC/LEFEVRE

REF: STATE 134185 AND 134532

1. AS BILL HARROP WILL ATTEST, THE AIG/AIIC
TEAM WAS IN VIRTUAL NON-STOP CONSULTATIONS
WITH THE EMBASSY AND WITH LAWYER ROTIMI WILLIAMS
ACROSS THE WEEKEND. STATUS AND NEXT STEPS ARE
AS FOLLOWS:

2. WILLIAMS IS PRESENTING PETITION TO MAGISTRATES
COURT TODAY OR TOMORROW REQUESTING IMMEDIATE RETURN
OF LEFEVRE'S PASSPORT SO THAT HE MAY VISIT HIS
AILING MOTHER IN USA. PETITION WILL BE HEARD BY
MAGISTRATE JUNE 2. PETITION PROMISES LEFEVRE WILL
ABIDE BY WHATEVER CONDITIONS MAGISTRATE WISHES TO
IMPOSE IN CONNECTION WITH COURT'S POSSIBLE DESIRE
THAT LEFEVRE RETURN TO NIGERIA TO CONTRIBUTE TO
ONGOING PROSECUTION OF CASE. (AT THE VERY LEAST
LEFEVRE MUST BE PRESENT IN COURT JUNE 23 WHEN THE
CASE COMES UP AGAIN IN MAGISTRATE'S COURT.)
PETITION INCLUDES STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR EASUM
VERIFYING US CONGRESSIONAL, MEDICAL AND OTHER
AUTHORISTIVE OPINIONS TO EFFECT THAT LEFEVRE'S
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PRESENCE AT HIS MOTHER'S SIDE IS URGENTLY NECESSARY.

3. ACCORDING TO WILLIAMS, MAGISTRATE'S DECISION ON
PETITION WILL DEPEND IN LARGE MEASURE ON POSITION
TAKEN BY POLICE PROSECUTION AT FRIDAY'S HEARING.
AMBASSADOR THEREFORE AGREED TO CONTACT INSPECTOR
GENERAL YUSUF ONCE AGAIN. WHEN EMBASSY OFFICER

SPOKE WITH YUSUF EVENING OF MAY 27 TO REQUEST THAT THE AMBASSADOR MEET WITH HIM, USUF SAID HE WANTED FIRST TO GET AN UPDATE ON THE CASE FROM HIS STAFF. HE PROMISED TO CONTACT THE AMBASSADOR PROMPTLY. AS OF MIDDAY MONDAY, MAY 29, WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM HIM. WE WILL CONTACT HIM AGAIN MAY 30 IF NECESSARY.

4. ALTHOUGH OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION WITH YUSUF (MAY 19 - SEE LAGOS 6347) INDICATED THAT HE SEEMED TO HAVE PERSONALLY DRAWN BACK FROM THE CASE, LEAVING THE CID INVESTIGATORS PRETTY MUCH FREE TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS, WILLIAMS SAYS YUSUF'S ATTITUDE IS KEY TO THE STANCE THE PROSECUTION WILL TAKE ON THE PETITION TO THE MAGISTRATE. YUSUF TOLD US MAY 19 THAT THE CID INVESTIGATION WAS COMPLETED AND THAT HE DID NOT THINK CID WOULD OPPOSE LEFEVRE'S LEAVING THE COUNTRY IF THERE WERE ADEQUATE ASSURANCE HE WOULD RETURN IF NEEDED. LEFEVRE HAS GIVEN AMBASSADOR HIS PERSONAL WORD ON THIS, HIS AIG ASSOCIATES SIMILARLY VOUCH FOR HIS RETURN, AND AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT TO THE MAGISTRATE SAYS AMBASSADOR HAS NO REASON TO DOUBT LEFEVRE'S COMMITMENT ON THIS POINT.

5. AIG CONTINUES TO PURSUE WITH WILLIAMS THE MERITS OF A REQUEST TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL THAT
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THE CASE BE DROPPED. CONTINUING DELAY IN THE COMPLETION OF THE MORTGAGE TRANSACTION MAKES THIS A LESS LIKELY OPTION THAN WE HAD ORIGINALLY ASSUMED. FURTHERMORE, AIG FEARS THAT SUCH A PROCEDURE MIGHT IN FACT DELAY A SATISFACTORY OUTCOME INDEFINITELY BECAUSE IT WOULD PROVIDE THE PROSECUTION WITH AN OPPORTUNITY, IN EFFECT, TO START OVER FROM SCRATCH AND DIG UP FURTHER MIS-DOINGS BY EGBE.

6. AS FOR THE ONGOING SUBSTANTIVE AIIC PROBLEM OF SHARES COMPENSATION AND A TECHNICAL SERVICES AGREEMENT, ABOUZEID TELLS US THAT RESULTS OF LATEST AIG/AIIC TALKS WITH THE CAPITAL ISSUES COMMISSION AND WITH THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE REMAIN INCONCLUSIVE. EMBASSY'S ECONCOUNS TALKED WITH U.K. BELLO THIS MORNING, HOWEVER, AND GOT A RELATIVELY UPBEAT IMPRESSION OF TSA POSSIBILITIES BOTH FOR AIIC AND BRITISH-AMERICAN. ABOUZEID RETURNS TO NEW YORK TONIGHT.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: IN VIEW REFTELS, DEPARTMENT

SHOULD INFORM SENATOR ROTH AND SENATOR BIDEN OF THE
PETITION TO MAGISTRATE'S COURT AND OF AMBASSADOR
EASUM'S CONTRIBUTION TO IT.
EASUM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, INSURANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAGOS06632
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780225-0333
Format: TEL
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780510/aaaaaibu.tel
Line Count: 120
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b9214693-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 134185
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2507399
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AIG/AIIC/LEFEVRE
TAGS: CASC, EFIN, EINV, NI, (LEFEVRE, LOUIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b9214693-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014